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Ministry of Education

$7.2M RENOVATIONS TO BROOKS SECONDARY COMPLETE

POWELL RIVER – A $7.2-million expansion and renovation of Brooks secondary school was unveiled today at the grand opening of the school's Max Cameron Theatre, which is hosting the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour.

"This is a creative project that demonstrates how government is working with school boards to ensure students and staff continue to have the very best facilities in which to learn," said Education Minister Shirley Bond. "And hosting the Banff Mountain Film Festival is just the first of many ways the improved building will be used by the community as a whole."

The Province contributed $2.1 million for the addition, which includes:

- New classrooms that increase the school's capacity by 225 students, allowing the district to consolidate all grade 10-12 programs into the school;
- Upgrades to the teaching kitchen to support the Malaspina University-College culinary arts (professional cook training) program offered at the school; and
- A new playing field.

"Adding a state of the art kitchen, theatre, video editing suite, dance studio and expanded classroom space will enhance the educational opportunities for our students and benefit the community of Powell River," said Pauline Galinski, Powell River school board chair.

The school district also used funds from the sale of surplus land and restricted and local capital reserves to build the new 400-person-capacity Max Cameron Theatre, create new First Nations space and increase its multi-purpose space. In addition, the school's mechanical system was upgraded using money from the annual facility grant. The board is also planning to build a new automotive shop at the school, using local capital funds.

"These upgrades and additions will provide students with more educational choices in state-of-the-art classrooms," said Bond. "The school district has an excellent trades training program, and the new theatre and teaching kitchen will help to strengthen it."

The Province has invested $3.9 million for the expansion at Brooks secondary and approved $797,000 for seismic upgrades to Grief Point elementary – a total investment of $4.7 million since 2000-01 in the Powell River school district. During the same period, the district has received $4.3 million in capital funding for buses and maintenance.

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Since 2001, the Province has invested $967 million on 26 new schools, 27 replacements, 140 additions and 28 renovations. By the end of 2007-08, the Province will have invested more than $2.2 billion in school capital and maintenance projects across British Columbia.

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